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# Learning Guide 7.3 Assessment-

# Gathering Information

## **Objectives**

* Understand the meaning of assessment
* Understand the purposes of assessment in supporting children and families
* Understand the legal requirements related to assessment.
* Identify the characteristics of assessment.

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| **Related Content:** [Module 7, Lesson 2 Gathering Information](https://rpm.fpg.unc.edu/module-7-assessment-plan/lesson-2-gathering-information)  **Instructional Method:** Problem-solving  **Level:** Intermediate  **Estimated Time Needed:** 10 min. instructor preparation; 25 min. learner activity |

## **Description**

In this activity learners will work together to select assessment tools and strategies based on individual child needs and within the legal requirements regarding assessment.

## **Materials/Resources**

* Learning Guide 7.3 Handout: Child/Family Descriptions
* Learning Guide 7.3 Activity Handout: Assessment Plan
* Learning Guide 7.3 Handout: Assessment Tools & Strategies
* Learning Guide 7.3 Handout: Legal requirements of Assessment

## **Facilitator Instructions**

1. Divide the learners into groups of three. Provide each group:
   * One (1) description of a child, their family, and their assessment needs,
   * Three (3) copies of Handout 7.2 – Assessment Plan,
   * One (1) Handout 7.2a – Assessment Tools & Strategies,
   * And one (1) Handout 7.2b – Legal requirements of Assessment.
2. Assign each group member one of the following roles:
   * Family and Child Advocate – this individual will maintain and advocate for the needs of the family and child during the discussion
   * Assessment Expert – this individual will be primarily focused on selecting assessment tools and strategies
   * Legal Expert – this individual will ensure the selected tools and strategies work within the legal requirements related to assessment
3. Instruct the learners to review the handouts and the unique circumstances of the child and family to decide on an assessment plan. The plan should include the appropriate tools and strategies to appropriately and effectively assess the child as well as meet the legal requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Provide the learners 15-20 minutes to complete this task.
4. Ask the learners to present their assessment plan to the whole group by describing the child and family and their assessment needs, describing the selected tools and strategies, and explaining how the assessment plan meets the legal requirements. Allow other learners to ask questions and provide feedback to groups as needed.

## **Suggested Assessment**

**Performance Indicator:** Learners will demonstrate understanding of assessment purposes and requirements through the creation of an assessment plan that is family- and child-centered.

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| **If the learner…** | **Then provide feedback…** |
| Does not understand the meaning or characteristics of assessment | Have the learner review Module 7 Lesson 2 and identify the meaning and characteristics of assessment. |
| Does not understand how to use assessment to support children and families | Have the learner reflect on the DEC Recommended Practices for Assessment and the focus on family.  Refer the learner to Module 4 Family [LINK |
| Does not understand the legal requirements of assessment | Have the learner review the IDEA text in Module 7 Lesson 2 and Handout 7.2b.  Refer the learner to other resources such as:  <https://sites.ed.gov/idea/> and <http://www.wrightslaw.com> |

## **Distance Learning Tips**

* Have learners work together within a Learning Management System (LMS) to create groups, exchange ideas, and have discussion.
* Provide individual feedback in a timely manner.

## **Learning Guide 7.3 Handout: Child/Family Descriptions**

**Directions:** Cut the following descriptions along the dotted lines and provide each group one description of a family and child with their assessment needs.

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| Child: Carson Age: 3 years old  Family Context: Carson and his family emigrated to the U.S. from India within the last year. His mother stays home with Carson and his younger brother and his father works with a local company. They live in a community with many other immigrants and attend a local place of worship. The family has very little experience of disability and they fear what the outcomes might be for their child.  Assessment Needs: A screening tool called the M-CHAT administered by the pediatrician has shown that Carson is at-risk for Autism Spectrum Disorder. Carson speaks both Hindi and English. His mother is also anxious about the assessment process and wants to stay with Carson during any assessments. |
| Child: Kaliyah Age: 5 years old  Family Context: Kaliyah is the middle child of four children, two older sisters and a younger brother. Both parents work two jobs and are very busy. Kaliyah and her younger brother attend the local Head Start program and her older sisters go to the local public school. All the children stay in after-school care until at least 6pm everyday. Kaliyah’s parents are concerned about her educational plan but also cannot easily take time off from work without losing pay.  Assessment Needs: Kaliyah has been found to be eligible for special education services for a speech and language delay. The IEP team need to observe Kaliyah during her daily activities and routines while she is at the Head Start program. The family would like the assessment results to be communicated in writing and/or over the phone. |
| Child: Drake Age: 18 months old  Family Context: Drake is the son of migratory workers who complete seasonal work throughout the state. The family is committed to providing as much consistency in the early intervention services he receives as possible and often ask for assessment records when moving counties to help with the continuation of services.  Assessment Needs: Drake is receiving physical therapy services to work on his overall muscle tone as well as occupational therapy services to work on his use of functional skills in a variety of routines including feeding and play. It’s almost time for the six month review to monitor Drake’s process. The parents have notified the IFSP team that they will be moving to the next county in a few weeks and would like Drake’s progress to be evaluated, documented in a written report, and provided before they move. |

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| Child: Emma Age: 4 years old  Family Context: Emma has recently been diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivty Disorder (ADHD). Her mother was also diagnosed with ADHD as a child and has both positive and negative experiences with the special education system. As an adult, Emma’s mother struggles with organization and memory and often has difficulty keeping appointments or organizing the paperwork involved with Emma’s care.  Assessment Needs: The IEP team needs to determine Emma’s eligibility for special education services through assessment. Emma attends a local preschool program for half days and then is picked up in the afternoon by her grandmother where she goes home to rest and play until her mother picks her up around 4:30pm. The team will need to observe Emma across settings and interview multiple people to get a full picture of Emma’s functioning. |
| Child: Shenique Age: 6 months old  Family Context: Shenique has been diagnosed with cerebral palsy and her parents are committed to providing as much care and therapy she needs for meeting optimal outcomes. Shenique’s father has taken a year off from work since Shenique’s birth and is her primary caregiver. He is eager to learn how he can implement therapies or interventions in the home to increase Shenique’s access to learning opportunities.  Assessment Needs: It has been determined that Shenique is eligible for physical therapy and speech and language therapy. The therapists need to conduct assessments to plan for functional, developmental, and educational strengths and needs. Shenique’s father would like to be present for all assessments and provide his own knowledge to the team. |
| Child: Joey Age: 2 years old  Family Context: Joey has a developmental disability for which he has received services for in the past 18 months. His mother is a single parent and relies on familial support as well as child care subsidies to provide care for Joey during the day. Joey’s mother works in the special education field and is familiar with the assessment process as well as her rights in participating on the team. She is highly motivated to participate but often requires flexible scheduling and phone calls to be made after hours.  Assessment Needs: Joey’s mother feels that a recently implemented intervention process is not helping Joey to acquire new skills. She would like the IFSP team to complete monitoring assessments to determine the effectiveness of the intervention and decide if it should be continued. |

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| Child: Sean Age: 4 years old  Family Context: Sean has recently been referred to the IEP team due to results on a recent screening instrument used in his Title I Pre-K class. Sean lives with his mother and brother at their aunt’s house. They recently lost their housing and his mother is actively looking for new housing that will not disrupt the school placements for Sean and his brother. She knows that it will be important for Sean to receive services if he needs them with the professionals who are already familiar with him and his needs.  Assessment Needs: The IEP team at the school will need to determine Sean’s eligibility for special education services based on his functioning across many routines and activities. Due to the current disruption of his home life, the team will focus observation efforts within the school day but also need to interview Sean’s mother and any other caregivers about his functioning during other times as well. |

**Learning Guide 7.3 Activity Handout: Assessment Plan**

Names:

Date:

**Directions:** In your group, review the given child/family context along with Handout 7.2a and Handout 7.2b to develop the following assessment plan. Assign each group member one of the following roles:

* + Family and Child Advocate – this individual will maintain and advocate for the needs of the family and child during the discussion
  + Assessment Expert – this individual will be primarily focused on selecting assessment tools and strategies
  + Legal Expert – this individual will ensure the selected tools and strategies meet the legal requirements related to assessment

1. Describe the unique assessment needs of the child and how the family context will inform the assessment.
2. Describe the selected assessment tools and how it is appropriate for the child and their assessment needs.
3. Describe the selected assessment strategies and how they are appropriate for the child, family, and the assessment needs.
4. Explain how this assessment plan meets the legal requirements set forth in IDEA.

**Learning Guide 7.3 Handout: Assessment Tools & Strategies**

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| Assessment Tools | Assessment Strategies |
| Screening Tools | Family Engagement |
| Ages & Stages Questionnaire (Squires & Bricker, 2009)  Brigance Early Childhood Screens (Brigance, 2013)  Kindergarten and Preschool Behavior Scales-2 (Merrell, 2002) | Solicit input from the family about the reasons for referral including their questions and concerns about their child.  Share the ways that the family can be involved in the assessment process  Explicitly acknowledge the family’s observations about their child’s behavior, skills, and development. |
| Eligibility Tools |
| Bayley Scales of Infant Development (Bayley, 2005)  Mullen Scales of Early Learning (Mullen, 1995)  Preschool Language Scales (Zimmerman, Steiner, & Pond, 2011) |
| Educational Planning Tools | Cultural, Social, Linguistic Accommodations |
| Assessment, Evaluation Programming System (Bricker, 2002)  Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers, & Twos (Dodge, Rudick, & Berke, 2006)  HighScope Child Observation Record (HighScope Educational Research Foundation, 1992) | Conduct assessments in multiple languages  Plan assessments across settings and routines/activities to have multiple instances of skills  Check biases and employ sensitivity when approaching families from different cultural backgrounds |
| Evaluation Tools | Working as a Team |
| Assessment, Evaluation Programming System (Bricker, 2002)  Carolina Curriculum (Johnson-Martin, Attermeier, & Hacker, 2004)  Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) (Good & Kaminski, 1996) | Engage the team in summarizing information that is easily understood by families  Reflect collectively on child progress and outcomes |

**Learning Guide 7.3 Handout: Legal Requirements of Assessment**

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| Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (2004)  Assessment legal requirements for children with disabilities age birth to five | |
| Part B (Section 619 – Preschool) | Part C |
| (1) In interpreting evaluation data for the purpose of determining if a child is a child with a disability under §300.8, and the educational needs of the child, each public agency must—  (i) Draw upon information from a variety of sources, including aptitude and achievement tests, parent input, and teacher recommendations, as well as information about the child’s physical condition, social or cultural background, and adaptive behavior; and  (ii) Ensure that information obtained from all of these sources is documented and carefully considered.  (2) If a determination is made that a child has a disability and needs special education and related services, an IEP must be developed for the child in accordance with §§300.320 through 300.324.  (Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1414(b)(4) and (5))[71 FR 46753, Aug. 14, 2006, as amended at 72 FR 61307, Oct. 30, 2007; 82 FR 29761, June 30, 2017]  (3) Additional requirements  Each local educational agency shall ensure that—  (A) assessments and other evaluation materials used to assess a child under this section—  (i) are selected and administered so as not to be discriminatory on a racial or cultural basis;  (ii) are provided and administered in the language and form most likely to yield accurate information on what the child knows and can do academically, developmentally, and functionally, unless it is not feasible to so provide or administer;  (iii) are used for purposes for which the assessments or measures are valid and reliable;  (iv) are administered by trained and knowledgeable personnel; and  (v) are administered in accordance with any instructions provided by the producer of such assessments;  (B) the child is assessed in all areas of suspected disability;  (C) assessment tools and strategies that provide relevant information that directly assists persons in determining the educational needs of the child are provided; | §1436. Individualized family service plan  (a) Assessment and program development  A statewide system described in section 1433 of this title shall provide, at a minimum, for each infant or toddler with a disability, and the infant's or toddler's family, to receive—  (1) a multidisciplinary assessment of the unique strengths and needs of the infant or toddler and the identification of services appropriate to meet such needs;  (2) a family-directed assessment of the resources, priorities, and concerns of the family and the identification of the supports and services necessary to enhance the family's capacity to meet the developmental needs of the infant or toddler; and  (3) a written individualized family service plan developed by a multidisciplinary team, including the parents, as required by subsection (e), including a description of the appropriate transition services for the infant or toddler. |